

NEWMAN (Robt.) al

CREMATION AND ITS IMPORT-
ANCE IN CHOLERA.

BY ROBERT NEWMAN, M. D., NEW YORK.

Honorary Member of Cremation Society, Berlin;
Member Executive N. Y. Cremation Society;
Member N. Y. Pathological Society; Executive
Member American Electro-Therapeutic Asso-
ciation, etc., etc.

REPRINT FROM THE

NEW ENGLAND MEDICAL MONTHLY

For April, 1893.



Danbury, Conn.

THE DANBURY MEDICAL PRINTING COMPANY.

1893.

CREMATION AND ITS IMPORT- ANCE IN CHOLERA.

BY ROBERT NEWMAN, M. D., NEW YORK.

Honorary Member of Cremation Society. Berlin;
Member Executive N. Y. Cremation Society;
Member N. Y. Pathological Society; Executive
Member American Electro-Therapeutic Asso-
ciation, etc., etc.

REPRINT FROM THE

NEW ENGLAND MEDICAL MONTHLY

For April, 1893.

Danbury, Conn.

THE DANBURY MEDICAL PRINTING COMPANY.

1893.

CREMATION AND ITS IMPORT- ANCE IN CHOLERA.

BY ROBERT NEWMAN, M. D., NEW YORK.

Honorary Member of Cremation Society, Berlin;
Member Executive N. Y. Cremation Society;
Member N. Y. Pathological Society; Executive
Member American Electro-Therapeutic Association, etc., etc.

FIRE is the best and surest germicide, and as such gains an importance during any epidemic. The United States of America have just escaped the introduction of cholera, and too much praise cannot be given to our energetic health officer of the port of New York, for his watchfulness to keep the pestilence from our shores. However, it seems the disease is lurking in Europe, becoming almost epidemic in Hamburg, and pessimists predict its appearance in New York during the spring of 1893. Renewed watchfulness is necessary, and preventive measures in different directions an imperative duty. These measures divide themselves in two parts.

1st. Quarantine arrangement for the detention of suspects and the treatment of the sick.

2nd. The prevention of contagion either through the sick, their excretions and baggage, or through the bacilli of the dead.

To accomplish the second part nothing can be more effective than cremation, and it seems our health officers are aware of such a fact.

From reports received through the newspapers, and statements by Dr. Bryant, the commissioner of health, it seems that bedding, clothing, etc., of patients were burned, and Dr. Jenkins, the efficient health officer of the port of New York, had the corpses of the cholera dead cremated at Swinburne Island.

This shows that our health authorities have recognized the importance of cremation, as the surest and best germicide.

Cremation is a very old way of disposing of the dead, and has of late been resurrected in a new and better form; but as a burial it has been only tolerated, not strictly legalized as a *regular* burial, while in some

other countries it is not even permitted.

While the friends of cremation multiply every day, it has some adversaries, who either oppose it openly or cover up their animosity by declaring that cemeteries are not dangerous, hence cremation not necessary.

From these reports we will investigate some of the opinions pro and con.

1. *Arguments or opinions against cremation* divide themselves into (a) medical, (b) religious and (c) unscientific reasons.

(a) *Medical men* are mostly in favor of cremation, and the few opponents are mostly bureaucrats, attached to some department of a government, who are inimical to incineration, according to laws, governing such country. That these men bear a title like privy councilor to its (Gcheimer Medicinal Rath & Ritter, etc.) is a sufficient explanation of their arguments and opinions. And even such medical men scarcely dispute the superiority of cremation to earth burial, but they dodge the question in disputing the danger

of cemeteries and thereby wish to show that cremation is not needed.

According to an article in the *New York Medical Journal*, November 5th, 1892, Doctors Schoenfeld and Grandhomme made a report on cemeteries in Prussia. They did not discover in the earth surrounding the coffins the species of bacteria that had infected the animal there buried; but admit, that bacilli are capable of development for a year. If these gentlemen did not find bacilli, it does not prove their absence, particularly if other investigators have found them. The committee concludes that the unpleasant influence of cemeteries is only evinced in the demonstrated inconveniences of odor and the accidents resulting from a descent into vaults, in which carbonic acid has accumulated.

Dr. L. H. Hamilton delivered a paper a few years ago before the Medical Jurisprudence Society of New York, intending to prove that there is no necessity for cremation, because he did not know that cemeteries were dangerous.

Dr. Reimann of Neumuenster in Holstein, wrote a few years ago, an article in the *Illustrated Journal* of Leipzig, doubting the dangers of cemeteries, and stating that two metres deep no worms exist, and are not found.

There are many facts to contradict the conclusions of Dr. Reimann. It is stated in works by Orfila, E. Hofmann, Eulenberg, and others that round worms, pelodera strongyloides (family nematodes) have been found in large masses in bodies and even in the brain substance of the dead.

The most important article against cremation was delivered by Dr. Petri, while the title of it appeared in the innocent form of

Are cemeteries dangerous to the health?

Dr. Petri in a paper at the Tenth International Congress in Berlin ⁽¹⁾ tried to show that cemeteries are not dangerous if they are situated in a healthy location and dry soil.

(1) Transactions Tenth International Medical Congress, Vol. V, page 126.

This paper is considered in seven subdivisions, some apparently repetitions of others. He states:

1. Bacteria is innocuous long before the body begins to decompose, and this is the case particularly in contagious diseases, as cholera, typhus and tuberculosis. He refers to investigations by Hofmann, Schottelius and Esmarch, showing that all microbes were dead in a short time and long before the expiration of one year.

No particulars about how investigations were made are given.

2. There is no reason to believe that other microbes may be dangerous to the health in cemeteries, even if no investigations had taken place.

No proofs are given, and it is granted that the investigations have not been made, or if made it was with no positive results.

3. It is improbable, nay impossible, that microbes can infect water or air, before they die.

The writer concedes, that ground water may mix and infect, but he considers it very exceptional and only possible in such soil as that in

which cemeteries should not exist.

4. Infectious microbes not *known* cannot act differently than as described in No. 3, therefore no mention of it.

5. Cadaver poisons or in infections, (ptomaine, toxine, poisonous albumen, peptone, etc.) cannot take place in a well conducted cemetery, even if water or pumps are near. Water impregnated with poison is diluted, or innocuous through chemical and physical organizations of the soil.

He concedes that poisoning has occurred, but says such is the fault of the executive of the cemetery, or the cemetery ought not to be situated in such a soil.

6. Gases produced by decomposition of cadavers are innocent, never dangerous, if cemeteries are well conducted.

7. Cemeteries are very healthy places—*if* they are kept well.

In the *discussion*:

Dr. Gaertner (Jena) contradicts the statement of Dr. Petri and says Schottelius found tubercle bacilli in cadavers after three years.

Dr. Litthauer (Schrimm) states

that rain *may* infiltrate the cemetery and thereby cause danger.

Dr. Petri's defence of cemeteries is very tame, and most conclusions are followed by "*ifs*" and "*buts*," which partly revoke his former statements. The principal point is that cemeteries ought not to be dangerous, if they are situated in a prescribed soil and kept in an ideal manner. Now the fact is, that the danger of many cemeteries has been proven, that they are not kept in an ideal manner, and that many regions do not possess such a soil, as Dr. Petri describes as not dangerous. It is well known that a certain earth will petrify bodies, but this does not prove, that Dr. Petri will find such a soil everywhere, on the contrary it is a fact, that petrifying soil is a *very rare* exception to the rule.

All the medical statements, that cemeteries are not dangerous, and that microbes have not been found are of such a negative order, that it does not contradict the affirmative facts, which have been reported in many instances by reliable informants.

(b) *Objections to cremation on religious grounds* have been made dogmatic and on belief, notwithstanding that nothing can be found in the Bible, which can in any way be turned against cremation. Many clergymen of the highest standing are openly favoring cremation, as will be shown later. If the objections are made only on account of the belief of certain sects, arguments are useless and not in good taste. We are not missionaries anxious to convert the heathen, but respect everybody's faith.

(c) *Arguments or objections on unscientific ground.*

Frivolous objections have been made by some, based on ignorance, superstition, custom, and for mercenary reasons. Tradition and usage have made the human race a machine by force and habit. It opposes everything new, no matter how good and beneficial, because it interferes with the daily routine. All such oppositions are kindled by ignorance, bigotry, superstition, old laws and usages, anticipation of individual losses. Most people have no other reason, then that our grand-

fathers did do it; consequently they follow the habit of their ancestors. However the very same persons travel now in Pullman vestibule cars, and do not think to walk or ride in a stage to Albany as their fore-fathers did. Education will do much, but in matters of reform and progress it is rather slow.

The only plausible objection to cremation appears in the loss of evidence in poisoning cases. However, the laws of Massachusetts has provided for any such emergency by the inquest of medical examiners, and more evidence is procured and crime detected than in New York, where undertakers can inject arsenic as an embalming fluid.

That a person may be in trance when cremated it is not likely to happen, but should such unfortunate mistakes be made it is better to be cremated than to be buried alive in a coffin.

11. Arguments and opinions in favor of Cremation.

(a) Sanitary from medical men.

It will be difficult to find even a small percentage of medical men, who as sanitarians, will oppose crema-

tion. Some may be (luke warm) in preferring cremation in individual cases, but they scarcely will appear as enemies of cremation and go not further than to say that cemeteries are not necessarily dangerous. The highest authorities are foremost in the ranks of favoring cremation. Therefore to mention all medical men, who are in favor of cremation would be equal to publishing a medical register of the whole world. It will suffice our purpose to enumerate a few from well known authorities, some living in our midst, others abroad, who have written on the subject or given a decided opinion.

Dr. Freire, of Rio de Janeiro; Dr. de Plongion, Lima.

Drs. Koch; F. Kuechenmeister, Schottelins, Esmarch, Reimers, Rudolph Virchow, Peter Trusen.

Dr. M. De Criostoforis, Reclem, Tini, Bianchi, Santa.

Dr. Levison, Kopenhagen; Dr. Wheelhouse, of Leeds; Carl Antolik, Arad Pasteur.

Drs. John O. Marble, of Worchester; Dr. E. J. Bermingham, Dr. Gray, of Orange, N. J.; Wm. M. McLaury, P. C. Cole, Dr. Curtis, Chicago; Dr.

Gross, J. W. Carhart, Geo. W. Boskowitz, Fred A. Jewitt, E. C. Sequin, Jas. H. Shorter, Ed. M. Sternberg, Bache M. E. Emmet, J. M. Sehley, N. E. Brill, Wm. A. Hammond, Jas. Lewis Howe, Clement Cleveland, Ercolani, Erichoon.

Darvin, Sir. Spencer Wells, Sir. Henry Thompson, Parkes, Adolph Wahltuch, Sir. Henry Playfair.

The Dangers of cemeteries are proven in abundance by position, facts and experiments, from which we will quote only a few to upset entirely the fallacies of Dr. Petri, who is the principal defender of cemeteries.

Dr. Domingo Freire, of Rio de Janeiro, has shown by experiments that the earth of cemeteries, where bodies of persons were buried who have died from yellow fever, was alive with organism matter, identical with those found in the vomiting and blood of patients who had died in the hospitals. He took the earth from the grave one year after the burial, one foot beneath the surface and found it swarming with yellow fever germs. ⁽¹⁾

(1) Domingo Freire Statistique des vaccinations

Professor Bianchi,⁽²⁾ showed that the Modena plague of 1878 was produced by excavations of earth in which, 300 years previously, victims of the similar plague had been buried.

Medical experts declared that the cholera epidemic of London, in 1854, was caused by upturned soil in which the victims of the plague of 1665; which it took the great fire to exterminate, had been interred. In 1853—in the Fourth Municipal District of New Orleans, 452 people out of a 1,000 died of Yellow fever, double that of any other section of the city. There were located vast cemeteries. John A. Marble, M. D., read a paper before the Massachusetts Medical Society in Boston, June 20th, 1885, in which he says: "By burying in the ground a body dead of any zymotic disease, we are planting for our descendants, seed, sure, sooner or later, to bring forth a horrible crop of pestilence and death! This can no longer be doubted, or the fact ignored, for it is uncontrovertibly established on the recurrent testimony of the high-

on moyen des cultures des microbe atténue de le fièvre jaune, pendant l'épidémie de 1888, 1889, Rio-Janeiro, 1890.

(2) Henderson. Cremation.

est authorities. The sudden death of the vandals who broke open the coffin of Francis I, in the time of the French Revolution, to rob it of its treasures, is another familiar instance in proof of the lethal effect of the gases generated by the corpses, and of their almost indefinite persistence. The terrible scourge in London, in 1854, was believed to have had its origin in the upturning of the earth in which the plague stricken victims of the year 1665 had been buried; and the report of the London Board of Health for 1849 states that the cholera was specially prevalent and fatal in the vicinity of grave yards. Dr. Santa vouches for the fact that a severe epidemic of fever was caused, but a few years ago, by drinking water poisoned by grave yard soakings in the villages of Bellita and Rotandella, Italy. More recently even the Monumental Cemetery at Milan was proved to have been the cause of severe illness in its vicinity, the wells being the channels of infection. Sir Lyon Playfair and other sanitarians attribute the peculiar fever in Rome to the decaying matter of remains of its millions of buried

dead. When a boy I suffered a severe and nearly fatal attack of typhoid fever by drinking water from a well situated not fifty yards from graves in a church yard adjoining my father's garden. Another member of the family was similarly affected a year later. The fever occurred when the well was low, and I have no doubt, in the light of our present knowledge of such dangers, that, repulsive as is the thought, I drank water filtered through the bones of my reverend ancestors buried there, and that the polluted water caused that illness. To those who criticize the advocates of cremation for quoting ancient examples only, of harm of graves, this instance will appear sufficiently recent and intimate." (1)

Schottelius read the result of his experiments at the meeting of the Society of Natural History in Heidelberg, 1889. He found the bacillus tuberculosis $2\frac{1}{2}$ years after burial, in the lungs, and animals inoculated with this substance died of tuberculosis.

Dr. Gray, of Orange, N. J., with

(1) John O. Marble, M. D. *The Torch versus the Spade*. Mass. Med. Soc. Vol. XIII, IV, 1885.

whom the writer is personally acquainted, reports that in his place is a well so near the cemetery that the men, while digging a grave, being driven from their work by a sudden and violent thunder storm, as they returned to their work found the grave nearly filled with muddy water, and as they went to the nearest well for drinking-water they found the well-water also muddy, and on further examination found a communication between the grave they were digging and the well, which they proved by filling the grave with water and finding a corresponding rise of water in the well. This case and several others have been reported by Dr. W. M. McLaury in a paper read before the Society of Medical Jurisprudence in New York, October 8, 1885. A very able paper was also read by Dr. P. C. Cole before the North-Western Medical and Surgical Society in New York.

In London two churches had to be closed in 1889, because the odor from vaults under the church endangered health. The cadaverous atmosphere of Westminster Abbey many have experienced, and often sickness has fol-

lowed sightseeing there. In New York epidemics have appeared in the vicinity of grave yards, while other localities remained healthy. This has been observed particularly near Trinity Church and around Washington Square, which formerly was the Potter's Field, and for many years around this square infants all died before they were one year old.

The Academy of Medicine in Paris, reported that dangerous emanations from Père la chaise, Montmartre and Montparnasse have caused diseases and death.

Mr. T. Spencer Wells of London, has written several articles, and declared that graves in which persons are buried, having died of contagious diseases are always a danger for the living.

Reports of Dr. Faryschar of Alexandria, and Dr. Abbott, of Cairo, proved that the cause of the pest in Egypt was grave yards on the Delta. (1)

Darwin in a paper read before the London Geological Society in 1837, showed a three inch high layer of worms, which were found in graves after 15 years burial.

(1) *British and Foreign Medical Review*, 1845.

Pasteur's vaccinated guinea pigs with virus from a sick cow, which had been buried two years, seven feet below the surface. The guinea pigs thus vaccinated died.

Dr. Wheelhouse, of Leeds, traced an epidemic of scarlet fever directly to bodies in a cemetery which had been buried 30 years.

Sir Henry Thompson as an advocate of cremation has written many valuable articles and says: "No dead body can be left in the ground without poisoning the earth, the air and the water above and about it. Within a few weeks the decomposing corpse is pervaded with bacteria or microbial organism, which together with the gases generated in the putrefactive process are struggling with each other with foul *melée*, each seeking to escape from its loathsome imprisonment."

Dr. Parks, (1) "the authority in hygiene," in his works states emphatically, that the vicinity of cemeteries is unhealthy.

In New York it has been observed that diseases were more frequent,

(1) Parks,—Practical Hygiene.

and during epidemics more violent in the vicinity of cemeteries. This could be observed in Trinity Place and in former years around Washington Square. While Sanitary Inspector in 1866 the writer made the same observations, and noticed more diseases in tenement houses recently built in 11th Street between 1st and 2d Avenue on ground areas, from which he saw the remains of the graves removed. The locality bred contagious diseases such as typhoid fever, diphtheria, etc.

There is on hand an abundance of proof, that cemeteries are dangerous to the life and health of the living, more than it is possible to criticize in this work, and more than necessary to disprove the allegations of a few reporters like Dr. Petri.

Recently more articles have appeared in the press, of which a few may be mentioned as follows:

Aug. G. Cobb, *Earth-Burial and Cremation—Urn*, October, 1892.

Prof. Carl Antolik, *Arad. Necessity of Cremation*, Aug. 24, 1892, before the Society of Hungarian Physicians.

Adolph Wahltuch, M. D. *The Dead and the Living*, a paper read

before the Medico-Legal Assoc., Manchester, 1892.

Our eminent surgeon, the late Dr. Gross, of Philadelphia, was a strong advocate of cremation and recommended it in some lectures. After his death his body was incinerated according to his wish.

In Puella de Rugat in Spain, the victims of cholera were buried during an epidemic in 1885. Five years later in 1890 these graves were opened, and a new cholera epidemic followed, which seems to prove that the contagious bacilli were alive after five years being buried.

While *the* sanitary side has been fairly represented in the foregoing notes, some conclusions from a paper of Dr. J. W. Carhart, of Lampasas, Texas, in favor of cremation deserves a place here. The title is: The Influence of Grave yards on Public Health or the Sanitary Disposal of the Dead. ⁽¹⁾

1. From whatever stand-point this subject is approached it must be with care and gentleness, since the graveyard, though a constant menace to public health has a pseudo-sacredness

(1) *Times and Register*, Nov. 21st, 1891. Philadelphia.

fostered by the profoundest sentiments of our natures.

2. The method of the disposal of the dead should be founded on reason and not on custom or sentiment.

3. The interment of the dead in the earth was never enforced by a statute, Jewish or Christian, and was merely incidental to both dispensations.

4. No law, human or divine, requires us to dispose of the dead in a manner prejudicial to the health and comfort of the living.

5. Whilst it may be an open question as to the right of the State to decide as to the manner of the disposal of the dead, except in exceptional cases, it is clearly the province and duty of the State to prevent such disposal as will in any wise jeopardize the interests of the living.

6. From all the facts at our command, we are led to the conclusion that the grave yard should become a thing of the past, and that incineration is the method most in accordance with science, sanitation, æsthetics, reason and religion.

(b) *Religious Opinions in Favor of Cremation.*

While it is well known and con-

ceded that many of the clergy are opposed to cremation and prevent progress in this direction under the cloak of religion, we have the brightest stars in the theological firmament as advocates. There is nothing in the Bible, which may be cited which shows that cremation sins against the religious teaching of any creed. Among all denominations we find theologians, even among Catholic priests and Hebrews, who are openly with all candor in favor of cremation. A clear dissertation if not the best on the subject, has been written by the Reverend Howard Henderson of Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Cincinnati, 1891, from which may be quoted as follows:

“Literalists object to incineration because of their material views of the resurrection. Will not ‘the pale martyr in his shirt of fire,’ whose ashes the winds have winnowed and wafted whithersoever they list, rise again? Will not the sea give up its dead, though the fishes have feasted on the flesh, and waves wasted and worn the bones of the wrecked? Will not the heathen come from the ashes

of the Suttee? He who could make men of dust, can raise them from ashes, from urn as well as grave. 'That which thou sowest is not that body which shall be, but bare grain; but God *giveth* it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed its own body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.' 'The vital germ of the resurrection body is no more destroyed by incandescent heat doing its office in fifty minutes, than it is by slow burning—putrefaction—in fifty years. Like the Hebrew children cast into the furnace, heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be, yet coming out unscratched, so, the presence and power of 'one like unto the Son of Man' is competent to bring from the dust of the crypt, from the ashes of the columbarium, a body like unto His own glorious body, upon which shall not be the smell of decay or fire. The body that pleaseth God should please us. It is his pleasure to 'change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto the glorious body' of His Son, and to preserve our personal identity, 'every seed its own.' 'I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy

[Christ's] likeness.' In the crematory the body is enveloped with a rosy light, and is at once reduced to its substantive elements. Put against this the rot and the worm, and can sentiment hesitate to choose the rapid from the slow burning? The heat, employed in incineration, is really annihilated as heat, and converted into molecular motion, and thus the original particles may more certainly subsist, retaining substantive identity, than when the body molds in the ground. We may thus resign from sight, and yet see by faith, that kindly power, which from the former kiln of nature 'made us of clay and formed us men,' and which is pledged to the overthrow of death and the grave."

"Grieved love clips a lock of hair, bitterly knowing it can keep nothing else. Inurned ashes, kept as the Greeks keep their lares and penates, and as the Romans the effigies of their heroes, is far more appealing to the tender susceptibilities of our hearts than putting in a pit of putrescence the corpse of our loved one. If, as Dr. Young says, 'religion is the proof of common sense,' let us cease

to count the beads of our rosary, to chatter the litanny of prejudice, and address ourselves to the problems that philanthropy and piety present to reason."

"To make a dogma and create a conscience with reference to the mode of disposing of the dead is to pervert the province of Gospel authority. This is a question for Christian liberty and the decision of reason rather than of religion. The disciple of incineration is neither a heretic nor a ghoul. To favor cremation as a preferable method is not too pronounced against earth-burial."

The Rev. Chas. R. Treat, Rector of the Church of the Archangel, New York, in his address delivered before the American Public Health Association at Brooklyn, October 23d, 1889, declares against earth-burial, and finds no objection to cremation, even if he has a new idea to create a Campo Santo.

Dr. J. Beck, a Catholic priest and professor of moral theology and dogmatic at the University Freiburg in Switzerland is favorably inclined toward cremation and discusses this

question in the *Swiss Church Journal*. (1)

Pastor H. Paira, Milan, officiated at a cremation, his sermon and prayer was a worthy ovation, showing that the immortality of the soul is not endangered by cremation. (2)

From opinions on cremation by the clergy we quote the following letters, the originals of which are in the possession of Mr. R. W. G. Welling, New York.

Boston, Mass., Feb. 1st, 1889.

Dear Sir: I have no doubt that cremation will work its way into general favor, and I am glad to think so. I am glad to remember that in *Old and New*, not more than fourteen years ago, I published a well considered article urging the reform in burial.

Rev. Edward Everett Hale, D. D.

New York, Feb. 2nd, 1889.

Dear Sir: Any objection to the practice of cremation must be founded either upon ignorance, superstition or sentiment. The enlightened Christian conscience must approve

(1) *Die Ostschweiz*, No. 181, 1892, reported in *Phoenix*, September, 1892, page 114.

(2) *Flamme*, November, 1892, page 1217.

it. It is one of those great reforms which are possible only in an age of scientific progress, and which make their way in spite of bigotry and conservatism.

When prejudice and fanaticism are overcome, the adoption of cremation will be almost universal. It is only a matter of time.

Yours very truly,
Rev. J. E. Raymond.

269 W. 125th Street.

New York, Jan. 30th, 1889.

My Dear Sir: "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." At least so much support from the Christian civilization of these times. To the average mind it does seem like a severe innovation, almost an outrage against the sacred, but it is possible to educate—educate even the obstinate. It is a question of buried or burnt. The disinfecting qualities of earth and fire. Available space for the one, greater economy of the other. I think cremation will win inside of another century.

Respectfully,
Rev. W. N. Searles.

New York, Jan. 22, 1889.

My Dear Sir: In reply to your in-

quiry of the 21st, instant, I beg to say that I have no prejudice unfavorable to cremation, and indeed, in view of the curiously inadequate and singularly unintelligent arguments, attacks and denunciations, which have been employed by those who are hostile to it, I have been rather disposed to sympathize with those who are seeking to introduce it.

But the argument of most effect in its behalf is one which must be made by scientific men, and especially by physicians. I wait to hear more explicitly and more fully from these, for when it can be shown that any such plan best conduces to the health and well-being of large communities, it will be likely to find general acceptance.

Very truly yours,

Rt. Rev. Henry C. Potter, Bishop
of New York.

Diocesan House, 29 Lafayette Place.

Sing Sing, N. Y., Feb. 6, 1889.

Dear Sir: In response to yours of January 19th, I am glad to say that my sympathies are with all forms of funeral reform, and especially with the advocates of cremation. Whether it ever be universally adopted or

not, it is only just that the unreasonable and unreasoning prejudices against it should be done away, and way made easy for those who prefer cremation to burials. Agitation and discussion, the use of the press, platform and pulpit, will do much to diffuse sound views on this subject.

As a clergyman I shall be glad to bring the matter at the proper time to the attention of those who listen to me. But I want more exact, multiplied, conclusive medical testimony. The sanitary argument will most quickly explode old prejudices.

Rev. Edward A. Lawrence.

Ithaca, N. Y., Jan. 23d, 1889.

Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your circular of January 22nd, and it demands from me the courtesy of a reply. I have not however, so strong convictions in reference to the matter to which your circular alludes to justify any special zeal in the matter. I have in a general way looked with favor upon cremation purely for sanitary reasons, but the difficulties in the way of getting cremation adopted in the villages and country are so great that it has seemed to be

impossible to bring about any very general change. I may add, that it seems to me the question should be settled purely on sanitary grounds. It is difficult for me to understand how any other reason can fairly be brought into consideration; other reasons seem to me to be founded on prejudice.

Rev. C. K. Adams, LL. D., President Cornell University.

New York, Jan. 30th, 1889.

My Dear Sir: You ask my opinion, as a Christian minister, in regard to cremation as a mode of burial. I see no possible religious objection to it. I see, from a sanitary point of view, much in favor of it. But I recognize, from the standpoint of the emotions, much which will have to be overcome before cremation can come into vogue. For myself I should have no objection to the cremation of my body after death. But I fear the cremation of a dear friend would be at present a shock for which I am not prepared.

I have thought it best to write my sentiments fully—usage and the growing conviction of earnest con-

sideration must prepare the way for cremation as a general practice.

Very truly yours,

Rev. C. C. Tiffany, D. D., Rector
of Zion Church.

37 East 39th Street.

New York, Feb. 23, 1889.

Dear Sir: Though not acquainted with the methods of the U. S. Cremation Society, I believe cremation in some method to be the only wise solution of the vast problem of disposing of the dead.

On the sanitary reasons, which are of course the most important, I have no technical authority to speak. But I believe that merely on grounds of feeling, the considerations of decent respect due to the remains of the dead are increasingly in favor of cremation. The grave, the tomb, are necessarily revolting to any imagination that looks beyond the surface. Indeed, the irrational horrors with which human fancy invests death, largely derive their imagery from the practice of interment, which brings us to the "cold grave," "to mingle with the clay," or in the "dark and gloomy tomb," makes us "food for worms."

Cremation, on the contrary, can suggest none but pure and elevated conceptions. I find large numbers of persons, especially young people, who express a desire for this reform.

Any religious objection to the practice cannot be serious. The Church honors many saints and martyrs whose bodies were consumed by fire; in the burial service, as if by some prophetic instinct, we still read "ashes to ashes;" and the "storied urn" retains itself among the most orthodox symbols of Christian burial.

I indulge the fancy that the practice of incineration will revive the ancient custom of gathering the memorials of the dead in places of public worship. The cenotaph, or the memorial window, now so common, do not gratify the natural sentiments as do the veritable relics of the departed. In the modern practice the imagination is not satisfied, and turns away from the empty inscription in the church to the actual grave where the dead lie. Westminster Abbey, without the "sacred dust" itself, would hardly be halloved ground. But the "ashes of

our fathers in the temples of our Gods," is all that the feelings claim. I can imagine the church of the future gathering about its alters the urns of its sainted dead, with the same solemnity and beauty as of old.

Remain, sir, very truly yours,
 Rev. Theodore C. Williams.
 Park Avenue Hotel.

P. S. As a scriptural motto for your society you might select this: "Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Or this:

"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

New York. Jan. 30th, 1889.

Dear Sir: I know of no serious objection to the practice. I do not suppose there can be any sanitary objection; and I suppose whatever form of legal objection there once was has been removed. I could officiate at a funeral service, knowing that the

body was to be cremated, with as much religious feeling and as great a sense of propriety, as if I knew that the body was to be buried in the usual form. I confess that the sentimental objection has some weight with me. If persons outside of my immediate family circle choose to be cremated, I have no objections; but I confess that I should much regret seeing the body of one who stands closely related to me in family or church life, cremated. This is a simple statement of my thought; it may be of no value to you, but as you have asked it I give it to you precisely as the case stands.

Very truly yours.

R. S. MacArthur, D. D., Calvary Baptist Church, New York.

New York, Feb. 14th, 1889.

My Dear Sir: I am aware of no argument against cremation that deserves consideration, and I regard that method of disposing of the bodies of the dead as intelligent reason and unpervverted taste.

Very truly yours,

William Hayes Ward, D. D., LL. D., Editor of "*The Independent*."

Boston, Mass., Feb. 16th, 1889.

My Dear Sir: I believe that there are no true objections to the practice of cremation, and a good many excellent reasons why it should become common.

Yours truly,

Right Rev. Phillip Brooks, D. D.,
233 Claremont St.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 16th, 1889.

Dear Sir: Cremation has always had a certain attraction to me. My father used to say to me, when I was a boy, that, except for the feelings of others, he would prefer that his remains should be so disposed of. He had a horror of physical blemishes during life, and as a natural result, shrunk from the idea of the decomposition of the body after death. The sentimental objection has, therefore, never had any hold on me. The sanitary necessities of civilized life renders this reform inevitable—an affair of time only. Cremation must be adopted by all civilized communities as a preventive to disease, and the day when this shall be the adopted method of disposing of the remains of our dead, is not far distant.

Yours sincerely, Chas. A. Bacon,
M. D., (Formerly of New York).

Garden City, L. I., Jan. 29th, 1889.

My Dear Sir: Yours of Jan. 19th, is at hand. I am glad of an opportunity of expressing my interest in the work of the Cremation Society. For many years I have thoroughly believed in cremation on a variety of grounds. Having tried to make my life one of usefulness to my fellows, I object to the possibility of injuring any one after I am dead. The thought that, what I cannot take away with me to a higher form of life is to be left as a means of poisoning life, is abhorrent to me. I prefer that my body shall be so disposed of as to put this out of the question. The religious objection has always been nonsensical to my mind.

Believing thoroughly in a life to come, I have not the slightest notion of that higher life being conditioned in any possible way by the way in which we get into it. Nothing but the stupid prejudice of a blind orthodoxy could allow any notion of this kind to have weight. In so far as it does have weight, it ought to be exposed and ridiculed. I have also, for years, had the most intense horror of thinking any one dear to me undergoing

the noxious process of decomposition, as we have made sure that it shall be made noxious by our whole mode of interment. I want those I love to pass from this life to a higher life without any such abhorrent decomposition of the form once dear to me. On every hand cremation has commended itself to my judgment, and I am sure that it is destined to prevail in the future. I expect to be disposed of thus myself, and do not know of any expression of opinion which I could offer that would have more weight than this.

Yours truly,

Rev. R. Heber Newton, D. D.

Atlanta, G., Feb. 28th, 1889.

Dear Sir: I vote with emphasis for cremation. It is clear to my mind that it is the method of the future for disposing of the flesh when the spirit has no longer any use for it. There are no valid arguments against cremation. Burial in the earth is now entrenched only in sentiment and custom. It will be a pleasure to me to do all in my power to break that sentiment down. Cremation is a "new departure," which is really an "old return," with improvements

in the light of science, which is the order of nature and the order of God. "Dust to dust" is the divine decree for the lower nature, when the higher nature has escaped into freedom from the confinement of its temporary home. 'Tis a question of process only, with wise regard for the living. Some superstitions may still invest the subject, but superstitions have "got to go." Progress is unfriendly to them, and progress is God's way. An enlightened imagination turns away with disgust from the retarded processes of burning in the grave, and welcomes the changes when the body is kissed by the transfiguring power of the air in the crematory, rosy with intense heat. There are many points of view from which to regard the subject, and from all cremation wins the judgment.

Very sincerely yours,

Rev. A. T. Clarke.

New York, Feb. 14th, 1889.

Dear Sir: The chief objection it seems to me, that at present can be urged against cremation, is that the process is costly. You may quote

me as heartily favoring the objects of your company.

Rev. D. S. Rainsford, D. D., Rector of St. George's Church.

209 E. 16th Street,

Brooklyn, N. Y., Jan. 21st, 1889.

My Dear Sir: I do not think I can do better than refer you to an article in the *Forum* (No. 3, if I remember rightly), for my very favorable opinion at any time.

Yours very truly,

Rev. John W. Chadwick.

New York, Jan. 22, 1889.

Gentlemen: I have not made up my mind about cremation, and imagine I shall not preach against it, so far as my thought turns now.

Yours,

Rev. Robert Collyer, D. D.,

New York, Jan. 21st, 1889.

Dear Sir: In reply to your favor of the 19th inst., I have to say that my views on the subject of cremation are entirely in accordance with your own. I believe that this method of disposing of the remains of those who were dear to us in life, is more reverent, more in harmony with refined feeling, besides being obviously superior on grounds of

public health, to the usual practice of earth-burial. I trust that, thanks to your efforts and those of your coadjutors, cremation will be received with increasing favor by all enlightened persons in the community.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Felix Adler.

New York, March 4, 1889.

Dear Sir: In reply to your communication of recent date I beg to say that I am in sympathy with the object which you have in view, and look with favor upon cremation as a substitute for interment. The objections to it are in my judgment wholly sentimental, and must in time give way to more rational considerations. Very respectfully yours.

Rev. David H. Greer, St. Bartholomew's Rectory,

342 Madison Avenue.

Warwick, N. Y., Jan. 21st, 1889.

Dear Sir: I was once opposed to cremation, but after a long examination, based on the reports of European and American scientific associations, the expediency and necessity of cremation were demonstrated to me to my entire satisfaction. I need not present an abstract of these

convincing reasons, as your pamphlet and circulars no doubt give them in full. A caption of my own views might be stated as follows:

1. Cremation reduces the body at once to pure and unrevolting dust.

2. Burial requires many years for a like result, and is repulsive and poisonous in its work through that long period of time.

3. It has long been noted that villages with cemeteries on higher land, even at considerable distance, has been the starting centres of fearful epidemics. When the cemeteries were removed several miles, the epidemics ceased their visitations.

4. Science shows that everything in a grave in due time comes to the surface. The gases and dusts are blown about by the winds and enter anew into all growing forms of vegetation and life, and re-enter into fresh combination with the waiting soils; it may be far away. After long periods of time anything committed to a grave will not be found there. When any one has learned this demonstrable fact, most of the objections against cremation vanish.

5. The body is but a temporary

garment of which we have many changes during an average lifetime. When the body is left it is left forever. The eagle hatched never seeks a return to the old egg-shell. God gives the shell a place and function. Its work done, return is impossible, even if desired. In regard to cremation, the true plan is for each one to examine carefully and fully all the facts and factors involved in the problem. Where this is the case, cremation is rapidly growing in popular favor. This brief statement may suggest why I greatly prefer the cremation of the human body to its burial.

Very truly,

Rev. G. W. Timlow, D. D.

Jersey City, Jan. 29th, 1889.

Dear Sir: I believe in cremation with all my heart, and consider it the only proper method of disposing of the dead. The arguments in its favor are overwhelming, and those who read up upon this subject are almost always converted to the new idea. I am glad to see that prejudice and blind conservatism are rapidly giving way to nineteenth century common sense. I prophesy that inside of twenty-five years, cremation

will become nigh universal in this country. Advancing civilization demands it and will have it. My own sister was cremated at Fresh Pond, and my father Rev. Henry M. Scudder, D. D., for so many years pastor of the Central Congregational Church, N. Y., has left orders to the effect that, upon his decease, his body shall be brought to this country from Japan, where he is now residing, and cremated in the State of New York. It is also my desire and command that when I die my body shall be disposed of in a similar manner. I prefer a "fiery chariot" to being eaten up by worms.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. John L. Scudder, Pastor First Congregational Church, Jersey City. Washington, D. C., Jan. 21st, 1889.

Dear Sir: In response to your request for an expression of my opinion respecting cremation, I beg to say that my objection to that process springs, I am satisfied, from false sentiment and inveterate prejudice, as I have long entertained a private wish for my own body to be disposed of in Indian fashion, on a plat-form in a tree. But from an

impersonal, intellectual and scientific standpoint, I entirely approve of cremation as a sanitary measure and matter of public hygiene, for reasons already too familiar to you to require that I should traverse them. Very truly yours.

Elliott Coues, LL. D.,

(c) *Unscientific and other Opinions in Favor of Cremation.*

While we find among the masses many opponents to cremation, converts and adherents among the better classes increase from day to day. To give the names only of those who have spoken in favor of cremation would almost fill a library, and the list cannot be given here for want of space, less their opinions and letters. Suffice to say approbations have come in from the best class, representing intelligence and standing in our community. Among opinions on cremation collected 1889 by the New York Cremation Society we find among others the following names, well known in large circles:

Laura C. Holloway, Brooklyn; Marshall P. Wilder, N. Y.; Lucy Stone, Boston; James M. Varnum, N. Y.; Mrs. J. C. Croly (Jennie June), N. Y.;

Mrs. Lillie Devereux Blake, N. Y.; Louis Liebman, Brooklyn; Rose Elizabeth Cleveland; Henry M. Taber, N. Y.; Edgar Fawcett, N. Y.; Luther R. Marsh, N. Y.; Edith M. Thomas, N. Y.; Moncure D. Conway, N. Y.; D. H. Cochran, of the Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute, Brooklyn; Mrs. Lippincott (Grace Greenwood), N. Y.; Chas. A. Dana, Editor of the *Sun*, N. Y.; Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Cambridge, Mass.; Hon. Abram S. Hewitt, N. Y.; Robert P. Potter, Editor of the *Press*, N. Y.; Professor F. W. Taussig; Theodore T. Ovington, Brooklyn; Hon. Chas. F. Allen, Commissioner of Agriculture; J. A. Irwin; M. A. Cantab, M. D., Dub., N. Y.; Chas. F. Wingate, Sanitary Engineer, N. Y.; C. M. vom Baur, Ex-President Arion Society, N. Y.; Hon. Chas. W. Horner; Alice De La Plongeon, Brooklyn; Andrew Carnegie; Hon. Geo. Hoadly, Ex-Governor of Ohio; Cassius Marcellus Clay, Whitehall, Ky.; Minnie Palmer, N. Y.; Elizabeth T. Peabody, Jamaica Plain, N. Y.; Samuel L. M. Barlow, N. Y.; Annie Wolf (Em 'Ly), Philadelphia; Thos. W. Knox, N. Y.; Josiah Quincy, Quincy, Mass.; Kate Field; Geo. E.

Waring, Jr., Newport, R. I.; Richard Katzenmeyer, President Arion Society; Clara Erskine, Clement Waters, Boston; Olive Thorne Miller, Brooklyn; Charles Francis Adams, Boston; Gen. Horatio C. King, N. Y.; Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox; J. H. Johnston, N. Y.; Prof. Chas. Eliot Norton, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.; George William Curtis. The following few letters are introduced as containing valid arguments:

21 West 26th Street.

Tarpon Springs, Fla., Feb. 5, 1889.

Dear Sir: It gives me pleasure to comply with your request to state some of the vital reasons for my belief in cremation. I believe in cremation.

First. Because it is the only safe method, from sanitary causes, of disposing of the dead.

Second. I believe in it, because it is the only way to prevent the ever occurring and dangerous encroachment of the living upon the territory assigned to the dead. This is seen in the older American cities, and is everywhere to be observed in the Old World.

Third. Considered from motives of sentiment, the old methods of slow decay, by burial, are revolting as compared with the speedy and clean process of disposing of the useless **tenement by fire.**

Whoever has seen the slain upon the battle-field gathered like dead wood and buried hastily in shallow trenches; or who has looked into one of the three hundred and sixty-five pits that are opened in turn, one each day, to receive the pauper dead of Naples; or who has seen the Potter's Fields of Germany or the ghastly arrangement of the dry bones of the millions in the catacombs of Paris; or who has seen the dogs of Constantinople make prey upon the human bones in its cemeteries? I say, that he who has witnessed all of this must earnestly hope and desire to have all that was corruptible in him made incorruptible by the purifying process of fire. If the heart craves sentiment, there is ample scope for its exercise in cremation, the ashes may be gathered in urns or worn as armlets; but, what is better still, they may be scattered where roses bloom and the violet diffuses its sweet perfume.

Yours, in hearty sympathy with the good work that furthers cremation.

Mary J. Safford.

New York, Feb. 14th, 1889.

Dear Sir: You ask my opinion of cremation. I think the opposition to it has largely originated in an ignorant prejudice. The objections raised against it have certainly lost much of their force in public estimation. Sanitary considerations are strongly in its favor, and as concerns sentimental feelings, it seems to me there is much to recommend a total and immediate destruction of the body after death.

Yours respectfully,

W. W. Astor.

New York, Feb., 1889,

Sir: Sentimentality is the most obstinate of enemies to all moral reforms. It devitalizes many of the highest forces of civilization. We solemnly consign our loving dead to slow decay and the gnawing of loathsome worms while pronouncing a meaningless or hypocritical hereditary benediction, "ashes to ashes," as if this purified and harmless condition was to be theirs at once. Did not God translate his well-beloved prophet and servant, Elijah, fire be-

ing His chosen element of honor? There were no mocking utterances in that grandly beautified ceremony of purification, and yet God's followers evade this example.

Most truly,

Mrs. C. S. Longstreet.

The Strathmore, B'way, Cor. 52nd St.

New York.

My Dear Sir: Success attend your worthy efforts, and right speedily. We want protection for the living, and the best way to secure it is to cremate not only our dead and decaying, cast-off garments of clay, but everything that infests the air and soil and water with the germs of sickness, disease and death. We, the ladies of the "Health Protection Association," are doing good work in agitating the subject of cremating the garbage, and can report some good results already. Come to our aid, and we shall be glad to cast our influences with you! My sister and myself were long ago converted to a faith in cremation. One has such a horror of rotting slowly back to the elements of one's material being! Who does not prefer the sweeter, cleverer,

swifter process of "rosy heat?" A few years ago the upper Delaware was flooded with the melting snows of spring, and the turbid, swollen stream overflowed its banks and washed out a number of graves in the country burying-ground. When the floods had abated, dead bodies and skeletons were found strewn along the banks and dangling from trees, which had been partly inundated. The sight was most shocking to the friends of the deceased and demoralizing to every passer-by, but making a most impressive object lesson in favor of cremation. We, who were witnesses of this event, are haunted even to this day by the horrible sight.

Most cordially yours,

Julia Thomas.

Conservatory of Elocution and
Physical Culture.

Winfield Junction, March 1, 1889.

Sir: Surrounded as I am in my township by 1,250,000 bodies of slowly decomposing humanity; knowing as I do the bad results sanitarily, with the fact that one little township, (Newtown) has almost the highest death rate in the state, and also having opportunity to observe the meth-

od by which your company proposes to solve this "very important question," the disposal of the bodies of the departed; for all these reasons I say that cremating the bodies of our dead ones is the only humane method of disposing of the same.

Emanuel Brandon, Member of the Board of Health, Newtown, L. I.

New York, Jan. 30, 1889.

Dear Sir: In reply to your note, I can state very truly, that I am heartily in sympathy with the cremation society, considering such disposition of human remains as the wisest, cleanest, most healthful and economical method of disposing of what is of no longer of any use, and must in time become a positive source of injury. If grave yards continue to be filled, the cities of the dead will in time become more populous than the cities of the living, and will threaten the existence of populous communities. Justice to the living, and the sentiments we cherish for the dead, seem to me the best satisfied by the quick diffusion of the shell they no longer inhabit, and the possession of that in-urned residuum, which like a lock of hair,

or the remnant of a robe they have worn, we may keep and guard.

Mrs. J. C. Croly, (Jennie June.)

148 E. 46th St.

Many more names can be added like Paul Hohlfeld, Henry Simon, Siemens, Carl Blind and the late Earl of Beaconsfield, but there are so many in our immediate circle that many will be surprised at the strong phalanx in favor of cremation.

The arguments in favor may be recapitulated as:

(a) *Sanitary* reasons as mentioned, make cremation *a necessity*.

(b) *Religious*: The fact is, cremation does not interfere with any dogma, or any creed in religion nor does the Bible object to it.

(c) *Unscientific* and other reasons.

1. Laws and medical inquests before cremation will detect crime better, than the usages in earth burial.

2. Should a person in a trance be buried in earth "alive," it is most terrible, while by cremation no suffering can occur.

3. In olden times cremation was practiced, hence if our ancestors did, it cannot be decried as a new custom.

4. Cremation is cleaner.

5. Cremation is more economical.
6. It prevents sickness occurring from visits to grave yards in inclement weather.
7. The constant care of graves and tombstones are expensive, which is prevented by cremation.
8. Ashes can be preserved as a relic forever, while a decomposed body is disgusting.
9. The dead occupy ground area, which is needed for the living, and for their comfort.

III. Progress of Cremation:

The incineration of the dead was a legal burial among the ancients, and was known particularly in Greece and Rome. The Iliad describes the funeral of Patroclus and Hector. It has been practiced in countries all over the world at different periods. The writer when a boy found several urns with ashes in Saamland, which is on the Baltic near Pillau, in East Prussia. These were the graves of the Hunes, an old Teutonic Tribe. Such spots could be recognized by a peculiar elevation of the ground on hills, and on digging, an urn was found of a

simple pottery production containing the ashes.

It seems that the earth burial was established in the fourth century. The re-introduction of cremation in its present form is very recent, and the agitation began less than twenty years ago by Professor Brunetti at the International Exhibition in Vienna in 1873. Cremation societies were organized, mild agitations made, and only for the last ten years the matter has taken root and branched out all over the world, so that at the present time it is acknowledged as the best method for the disposal of the dead by the unprejudiced intelligent, and a necessity by every sanitarian and scientist.

The present *modus operandi* of cremation is much improved and differs widely from the burning of bodies in olden times. At present the body is placed in a heated retord, no fire burns the body, and only heat of about 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, makes the body incandescent, the liquids are evaporated and leaves nothing else of the body than about

four pounds of ashes in the form of a gray powder. There is nothing unpleasant, it is in every aspect an æsthetic process. The ashes may be kept in privacy, at home or in a Columbarium, or even buried, according to the desire of the relatives. Such ashes may be placed in urns of terra-cotta, marble, etc., in any design and with an inscription desired. Some designs are hereby shown.

The progress of cremation has been steady, the societies and their members increased, crematories erected, and incinerations kept up by a larger number every year.

In the United States are 32 lively cremation societies, particularly in the following places: Chicago, Denver, Des Moines, Jersey City, Milwaukee, Sacramento, Savannah, Springfield, Ill., Washington, D. C., Worcester, Mass., Omaha, Baltimore, Md., Boston, Mass., Buffalo, N. Y., Cincinnati, O., Davenport, Iowa, Detroit, Mich., Lancaster, Pa., La Crosse, Wis., Los Angeles, Cal., Louisville, Ky., New York, Newark, N. J., New Orleans, La., Oil City, Pa., Philadelphia, Pa., Pittsburg, Pa., San Antonio, Texas, San Francisco, Cal., St.

Louis, Mo., Troy, N. Y., Washington, Pa.

The following statistics, showing the steady increase of incinerations in the crematories of the United States has been taken from *The Urn*, December, 1892. There are 15 crematories in the United States in which from 1884 till 1892, 2017 incinerations have taken place as follows:

TABLE OF CREMATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1881 TO 1892.

CREMATORY.	'81-'84	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	TOTAL
New York		(5)	82	61	86	108	152	176	203	868
St. Louis					24	20	42	60	60	206
Philadelphia					14	28	31	51	59	183
Cincinnati				11	21	34	45	43	28	182
Buffalo			9	17	16	23	30	37	24	156
Los Angeles				7	5	12	17	29	39	109
Detroit				7	9	17	20	23	25	101
Pittsburg			14	9	11	8	9	13	12	76
Lancaster, Pa.										
Washington, Pa.	40*									40
Baltimore						3	5	12	15*	35
Troy, N. Y.							4	10	12	26
Davenport, Ia.									15*	15
Swineburne Island								9	11*	20
New York Harbor										
Waterville, N. Y.										0
	40	5	100	112	186	253	355	463	503	2017

*Close estimate for want of exact figures.

In San Antonio, Texas, the crematory set on fire by an incendiary

last summer, is in the process of rebuilding.

In Troy, N. Y., "The Gardner Earl Crematory" is a memorial erected by Mr. and Mrs. William Earl, for their only son Gardner, and is supported by them independent of cremation.

In other places crematories are in the state of erection, as San Francisco, La Crosse, Wis., Boston, etc.

The secretary of the *New York Crematory*, which is in Fresh Pond, Long Island, reports that the increase in business has been steady and satisfactory, from 82 cremations in 1885-86 to 203 in 1892, as per table; \$28,000 stock, all sold, is divided among 200 shareholders. The marble columbarium, an addition to the original crematory is being completed.

The following birthplaces were given for 870 bodies cremated at Fresh Pond:

Germany 437, United States 283, England 33, Austria 21, Switzerland 20, France 18, Ireland 9, Italy 7, Hungary 9, Denmark 6, Russia 2, Scotland 4, Belgium 3, Holland 3, India 4, Cuba 3, Australia 2, West Indies

1, Asia Minor 1, Canada 2, on Mediterranean 1, unknown 1.

They are classified: Men 552, boys 46, women 245, girls 27.

During the last year two friends of the writer were incinerated at Fresh Pond, both physicians. Dr. Jose Miguel Parraga, a member of the council of the Cremation Society, and Dr. Chas. De La Vergne, a rising medical man of Brooklyn, with whom the writer has spent many pleasant hours. He died as a hero of diphtheria, contracted in attending his niece.

A new journal, the organ of cremation in New York, "*The Urn*," is prosperous. It is published by our energetic friend, Louis Lange, 57 Willett St.

In *Europe* the principal cremation societies are in Berlin, Copenhagen, Genoa, Hamburg, London, Milan, Paris, Rome, Stockholm, The Hague, Vienna, Zuerich, Bale, Heidelberg, Dresden, Gotha, Offenbourg, Manchester, Livorno, Frankfurt, La Chauxdefond, Carlsruhe, Darmstadt, Ober-Ingelheim, Chemnitz, Stuttgart, Mannheim, Munich, Baden-

Baden, Leipzig, Offenbach, Wiesbaden

Crematories are mostly in *Italy*, where Dr. de Christoforis in Milan, and others have espoused the cause of cremation most energetically, and has been sustained by the laws of Italy and the aid of his friend Premier Crispi. In 19 crematories in Italy, have been 952 bodies incinerated from 1876 till 1887, of which number 518 were cremated in Milan. Paris has had only 147 incinerations during the year 1892.

In *Germany* are 19 societies; there the progress is slow on account of the red tape process of the government bureaus, and they have done much to retard the development of cremation. Under such draw backs too much praise cannot be given to Alderman E. Matterne, who, as president of the Berlin cremation society, has energetically and systematically worked and gradually gained many achievements. The society was founded March 24, 1874. The columbarium was ready and inaugurated November 23rd, 1890. In 1892 the society has increased to 1400 members, and the government at

last has given the permission to build a crematory.

The crematory of Gotha was before 1892, almost the solitary institution of Germany, because the Grand Dukes of Coburg Gotha, always known as the most liberal and intelligent of Germany's crowned heads, had legalized and protected cremation. In Gotha in 1892, during the year, 167 incinerations took place, and 1149 totals since 1878.

During 1892, two more crematories were added in Germany. In Heidelberg 55 incinerations have taken place during 1892.

The third crematory, in Hamburg, was ready in August, 1891, but the Hamburg Senate was tardy with the permission to allow its use. At last it came and the first cremation in Hamburg, (Ohlsdorf), took place November, 19, 1892, the body of a retired merchant, I. E. D. Dukwitz, with impressive ceremonies, floral decorations, sacred music, a sermon by Pastor Cropp, and accompanied by members of the Anschar society, who appeared in their Spanish uniforms. The crematory has the

Schneider system by Engineer Richard Schneider in Dresden.

The fourth crematory has been built in Offenburg, a. m.

The Japan cremation is a religious rite of the Buddhists, and during an epidemic compulsory. In Tioka are six crematories.

Apparatus for Cremation.—In Europe Siemens principle is favorably known and is used in Gotha.

Klingenstierna (Stockholm) system is among other places, introduced in Stockholm, Heidelberg, and Offenbach.

Feist system was originally built in Forbach by a veterinary surgeon, George Feist, is not complicated.

Burry system is in Zurich.

System Rey consists of a simple portable crematory, suitable for the army and hospitals.

The Venini process is used in Buffalo.

The latest system is introduced in Hamburg by Richard Schneider of Dresden, who will also build the crematories in Berlin and San Francisco.

In Italy are used the following

systems: Gorini, Venini, Rey, Guzzi, Ravizza, Spasciani-Mesmer.

In Boston a new disinfecting apparatus has been built for the Boston quarantine station.

IV. Cremation and its Importance During Cholera.

There is a difference of opinion in almost every movement, and while cremation has some adversaries, yet the thoughtful sanitarian will with very few exceptions recommend cremation as the best means of preventing the spread of contagious diseases, and as having many other advantages over burial in the earth. While reasons and facts will convince any unprejudiced mind, the opinion of an acknowledged expert and scientist will be more apt to turn the scales with the masses, particularly those who are not inclined to read, study and think for themselves. A letter in favor of cremation as a sanitary measure, and as a prevention of contagious diseases comes just to hand from the highest authority in Hygiene and Pathology, Professor Rudolph Virchow in Berlin. The copy has been sent to the writer from his friend Alderman E. Matterne, in

Berlin, the President of the Berlin Cremation Society.

Dr. Virchow writes as follows:

Berlin, December 6th, 1892.

To the Cremation Society, Berlin:

Your esteemed favor of October has been duly received, in which your trustees ask me to give a medical expert opinion of the value of cremation, particularly of such dead persons, as have died of cholera or other contagious diseases. In answer, I confirm fully my opinion stated in the *Prussian Diet. (German Landtag,)* 1881, that cremation is useful as a sanitary and also a national economical measure.

During epidemics cremation is a necessity. My experience is that heat, even below the point of incineration, has prevented contagion, and is a good destroyer of microbes, while total cremation has given the greatest security.

Cremation should be introduced particularly in large cities, as graves in cemeteries, located near dwellings, may endanger the living in the neighborhood.

Sig. (Rudolph Virchow).

How is Cholera Propagated?

Cholera may be at home in the Orient, and from there it is at certain times brought towards the West by the natural ways of travel. In Europe or America there is, as a rule, no cholera, but it may come as an epidemic by the natural ways of travel and commerce, either by travellers and emigrants, or by baggage and merchandise, and, if once introduced, spreads with great rapidity through excretions, clothing, bedding of the patients and their dead bodies. If cholera is carried into a country or city by a few individuals, the contagion is propagated with such a rapidity, that the best medical treatment may not arrest the disease, and the undertakers and their assistant tending the earth-burial help to multiply the sick. Pestilence is soon established to such a degree, that the authorities are helpless. Several other factors have been observed through which the disease is spread.

Cholera may be carried by insects and flies, who have been in contact with cholera patients or their dead.

Gatti, Grassi, Koch ⁽¹⁾ and Simmonds are authorities, who have made bacteriological experiments. They kept flies, which had been seen sitting on cholera corpses, at the laboratory and after some time found the comma-bacilli in them and cultures with this proved still more the presence of the same. While such insects may propagate cholera within a certain distance, such contagion carrier will be very rare, and it will not bring a pestilence across the ocean.

Water: in different ways may be dangerous. It is well known, that anybody who drank water from the Elbe during the last epidemic in Hamburg, was a subject and was kept under observation. Biernacki, ⁽²⁾ found in the well, in Lubin, a suburb of Hamburg, cholera-bacilli. The well was near a single house, in which in a few days 12 persons were seized with cholera. All these had been drinking from that well. His experiments were made very carefully, and he found the specific bacilli in large numbers two days after the beginning of his examinations.

(1) Eulenburg-Beal Encyclopædie et ges. Heith. iv. p. 234.

(2) *Deutsche Med. Wochenschrift.* No. 42, 1892.

Prof. C. Fraenkel of Madgeburg, found comma-bacilli, in the Rhine-Ruhr Canal, where a boat had been anchored, whose owner had died of cholera, and where his excretions had been emptied. Water in the hold of a vessel is also dangerous. In the hold of a boat on the Elbe, Lubarsch found bacilli, on the same boat a child had died of cholera eight days previous.

Earth: in graves through burials may cause a new epidemic. Sanitary Commissioner Dr. Doering, in Berlin, has shown that cholera bacilli are living in graves and may be liberated by water and thereby create the disease. That graves are dangerous in this way can be proved by an incident in New York. During the cholera epidemic in 1866, some emigrants were buried in Wards Island, and nearly at the same time a new epidemic appeared in the city opposite the Island in 93rd St., near 3rd Avenue. Similar instances have been observed and have been mentioned before.

As a Recapitulation, cholera is propagated by immigrants, merchandise,

clothing, excretions, water, earth, corpses, and insects.

How is Cholera to be Prevented?

—The best prevention is to keep cholera and bacilli out of the country, but if it comes, to keep and treat it in quarantine.

If quarantine is the best factor to prevent an epidemic and to destroy any contagious carrier, it would be well, then, to follow Virchow's advice: heat vel cremation! The experiment is not new, has been done and always with success. The following letter will prove how heat, can in an imperfect manner end an epidemic of cholera:

Brooklyn, N. Y. Feb. 5th, 1889.

Dear Sir. I am most decidedly in favor of burning the dead, and cannot comprehend why so many object to it. The terrible diseases that from time to time cast communities of human beings into an abyss of grief, would lose their hold in a short time if the victims were promptly consigned to the purifying action of the flames. What possible good can there be in burning clothes and furniture, if the infected flesh be allowed to remain in existence?

In 1868 there was a dreaded epidemic of yellow fever in Lima, Peru; as many as three hundred patients dying each day. From the beginning Dr. le Plongeon, then practising in that city, urged the cremation of the dead. It was impossible to bring the public mind to contemplate such a course. Finally an arrangement was made to keep large fires on the trenches filled with corpses, public attention not being drawn to the fact. At once the plague abated, and soon died out.

Sir Spencer Wells recommends cremation in cholera in communication to the *Times*, and in other articles. He says, that graves sooner or later will renew cholera epidemics through the earth, water or air.

Dr. Koch in observing cholera in Toulon and Marseilles some years ago, ordered the incineration of clothing and bedding of persons who succumbed to cholera.

Fr. Kuchenmeister recommended the cremation of all who have died of cholera, as the only safe method to destroy the comma-bacilli; of the same opinions are Dr. Blaschko, ⁽¹⁾ and Dr. Th. Herzberg in Berlin.

(1) *Deutsche Medicinal Zeitung* No. 60—1882.

In the first part of this article many authorities and facts have been mentioned, which all prove that cremation is the best germicide to destroy the carriers of cholera. With great pleasure have we noticed, that the health authorities of this state and city have recognized that fact, and have ordered the burning of clothing and bedding and the cremation of cholera dead in Swinburne Island during the last summer, when New York and the whole United States was in great danger.

Neglect of such prevention has often been followed by disease and death—only one instance as an illustration. In Gonesse, near Paris, a nurse was ordered to burn the clothing of the cholera deceased. Instead of obeying his orders, he took the clothing to his home, which was followed by the sickness and death of himself and his whole family.

The care, hard work and watchfulness of our health officer of the port of New York, under adverse circumstances prevented the cholera from entering New York and America during last summer, and there is no doubt that it will be kept out of

America during the next year. With the former experience and better precautionary measures, Dr. Jenkins will be even more prepared to keep the pestilence out of America.

If suspects arrive, they must be kept in quarantine under observation a reasonable time, which can be done without going to extremes. If cholera cases appear, they must be treated, and the ships and people disinfected; as also all excretions thoroughly disinfected. Dr. A. S. Ashmeed, in *Science* gives four rules, to prevent cholera, as follows:

I. Let the drinking water be properly isolated; that is keep the cholera germs from the drinking water.

II. Let the fæces and other discharges be disinfected with quicklime or common whitewash. This is by the way, what Prof. Koch recommended to the Central Sanitary Board of Japan.

III. Let the clothing be disinfected with dry heat, 212 degrees Fahrenheit, and afterwards with steam.

IV. Finally, let the cholera corpse be cremated instead of buried.

It may be added, that it is necessary to disinfect thoroughly the

rooms, furniture or ships wherein persons were sick with cholera—and sterilize drinking water and milk. A strict observation of all possible carriers of contagion must be maintained.

Vaccination has been practiced as a prevention of cholera. The experiments so far do not warrant a decision of its success.

In cases of danger the introduction of crematories either stationary or portable is necessary.

It will be seen how important cremation is in the prevention of cholera. A German scientist proposes to disinfect the Elbe and other rivers and also sewers by electricity. His argument is that an electric current will chemically change the water and destroy cholera-bacilli. This may be possible, but at present is only a theory.

It has been proven, that cholera can be kept from entering America, by proper means at the quarantine station. The question now arises, is it better to continue a plan which has been successful and will be successful again, or is it wise to suspend immigration, exposing thereby the

whole Canada border line, a convenient way of introduction of cholera, and at the same time ruining our commerce and the Steamship Companies, as well as depriving the country of the capital and labor of desirable emigrants. Our Salons at Washington will decide. How, *nous verrons!*—This brings us to consider.

V. *The Legal Aspect of Cremation.*
—Cremation is treated very differently by the governments in Europe and America. Common sense would expect, the law permit it anywhere.

Facts however show, that what is lawful in one state is forbidden and even a crime in other communities. The different states of the United States of America are sovereign and each have laws of their own, for their Government, but yet under the constitution of the United States, certain powers are vested in the National Government through which it often happens that the federal and state authorities are in conflict to somebody's detriment. What an absurdity is it, that a marriage in Hoboken is perfectly legal, while a judicial decision in New York prohibits such a marriage act.

It is also very questionable if our ports are better guarded against pestilence when the federal and state authorities act each independently, instead of under one authority and system. The proceedings and speeches about bills for immigration and quarantine at present (January 1893) in congress are not intended to create confidence for harmonious action. It would be a blessing if America had one law for all states about cremation, cholera and quarantine. At present cremation in America, with very few exceptions, is not legalized but only tolerated; and any bill under the disguise of an innocent title may prohibit cremation. The danger is, that any fanatic may introduce such a bill to a state legislature at any time and the passage would be no wonder, even if it struck against individual liberty.

Progressive science and sanitation may demand, but the advocates of cremation do not wish to impose or force it on the unwilling. To favor cremation as a preferable method is not to pronounce against earth-burial. Let every one decide for himself, according to his conscience and personal

wishes, but the cremationists have a right to demand, that cremation should be recognized so as to make it a legal burial. At present the Board of Health in New York does not give a permit for "cremation at Fresh Pond," but simply writes a permit for burial in Mount Olivet. It is necessary to have a law passed regarding cremation. The state of Massachusetts has such a law in operation since 1885 which is very good, and as such is given here a place for perusal and as worthy of imitation.

The Massachusetts Law Regarding Cremation.

An Act authorizing the formation of corporations for the purpose of cremating the bodies of the dead.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

Sec. 1. Any five or more persons may associate themselves together in the manner prescribed by chapter one hundred and six of the Public Statutes, with a capital of not less than six thousand, or more than fifty thousand dollars, for the purpose of providing the necessary appliances and facilities for the proper disposal

by incineration of the bodies of the dead; and corporations so established shall have the same powers and privileges and be subject to the same duties, liabilities and restrictions as other corporations established under said chapter, except as hereinafter provided. The par value of shares in the capital stock of corporations organized under the provisions of this act shall be either ten or fifty dollars.

Sec. 2. Every such corporation may acquire by gift, devise or purchase, and hold in fee simple so much real estate not exceeding in value fifty thousand dollars, as may be necessary for carrying out the objects connected with and appropriate to the purposes of said corporation, and situated in such place as the state board of health, lunacy and charity may determine to be suitable for said objects and purposes.

No building shall be erected, occupied or used by such corporation until the location and plans thereof, with all details of construction, have been submitted to and approved by

said board or some person designated by it to examine them.

Sec. 3. Every such corporation may make by-laws and regulations consistent with law and subject to the approval of said state board, for the reception and cremation of bodies of deceased persons, and for the disposition of the ashes remaining therefrom, and shall carry on all its business in accordance with such regulations as such board shall from time to time establish and furnish in writing to the clerk of the corporation, and for each violation of said regulations it shall forfeit not less than five hundred dollars.

Sec. 4. No body of a deceased person shall be cremated within forty-eight hours after decease, unless death was occasioned by contagious or infectious disease; and no body shall be received or cremated by said corporation until its officers have received the certificate or burial permit required by law before burial, together with a certificate from the medical examiner of the district within which the death occurred, that he has viewed the body and made personal inquiry into the cause and man-

ner of death, and is of the opinion that no further examination nor judicial inquiry concerning the same is necessary. For such view, inquiry and certificate he shall receive the fees prescribed by section nine of chapter twenty-six of the Public Statutes for a view without an autopsy by examiners in counties other than Suffolk County. Medical examiners within their respective districts shall make such view and inquiry upon application therefor and payment or tender of said fees.

Sec. 5. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Approved, May 26, 1885.

With such simple and good laws in favor it is humorous to relate, that in the State of Massachusetts exists "no" crematory. It is gratifying to find that in the United States of America, cremation has not been hindered legally anywhere, but has been practiced in 17 crematories with success and dignity, and several crematories are at present in the course of erection. It is hoped that cremation soon will be legalized as it deserves to be.

In *Europe* matters about cremation are far different. The only countries in which cremation is legalized and protected by the state are France and Italy, and there are many crematories in full blast almost every day. In Paris cremation increases every year. In Holland, the erection of crematories is permitted, but their use is not allowed. More curious is the situation in Germany. In Gotha the cremations are protected by the liberal ruler of the country, while there are no laws about it in Germany. In Heidelberg cremations are tolerated. In Hamburg the Senate gave the permission to build the crematory, but would not allow it to be used. Only in November, 1892, such a permission was granted. In Prussia, particularly in Berlin, cremation was forbidden, and any permission for it refused. The dead to be cremated, had to be sent to Gotha, paying a high rate for transportation by rail. All petitions of societies, one from 15,000 citizens, another even from the liberal common council of Berlin were politely refused, or simply not granted, by the Department of the Interior. At last in 1892, a permis-

sion was given to build a crematory in Berlin and the common council has ordered an apparatus from Schneider in Dresden.

To comment on these situations, the writer does not feel inclined, as he does not wish to have any projected visit to Berlin prolonged by an invitation there from the Police Department for the Department of the Interior.

In the State of New York our sanitary authorities are, up to date of advanced science, all in favor of cremation, but your petitioner clamors to the legislature, whose members are not all sanitarians.

"Legalize Cremation!"

